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ABSTRACT

This instructional booklet is part of Learning Package #2 on self concept development and child behavior used in conjunction with the Child Development Training Program at Bemidji, Minnesota. The booklet is divided into 15 brief sections which emphasize: (1) techniques of observation and experimentation; (2) measurement of the readiness concept; (3) measurement of the conservation concept; (4) frustration in the context of personality development; (5) social development in solitary, parallel and cooperative play; (6) emotional development and the development of feelings of adequacy; (7) awareness of the effects of evaluative and behavior-specific comments on children; (8) awareness of how the teacher's feelings affect the children; (9) the concept of setting limits; (10) awareness of physical evidence of emotional discomfort in a child; (11) alternatives to offer a child to help him or her cope with negative feelings; (12) awareness and understanding of serious emotional problems in children; (13) how to direct behavior; (14) how to assess a child's development; and (15) information on behavior checklists. Also included are 14 written activities, a list of suggested readings, references, and a package evaluation form. (The entire Learning Package #2 consists of this instructional booklet; readings from "The Psychological Development of the Child" and "Understanding Young Children: Emotional Development and Disabilities"; and the Portage Project Checklist on socialization and cognitive development in children.) (SE)

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PSYCHOLOGY: DEVELOPMENT OF THE YOUNG CHILD

The Second Learning Package for the Self-Concept Component of the Child Development Training Program at Bemidji State University, Bemidji, Minnesota.

By

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©

by

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1975

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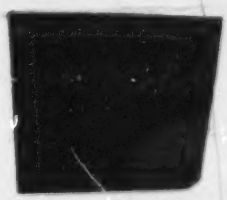

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8.2.2. Filmstrips - none

8.2.3. Materials

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8.2.3.2. Colleen A. Mayer, Understanding Young Children: Emotional Development and Disabilities.

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OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this package, you will be able to:

1. Demonstrate a knowledge of the techniques of observation and experimentation.
2. Conduct an experiment to measure the concept of readiness and demonstrate a knowledge of how it affects timing in teaching.
3. Conduct an experiment to measure the Piagetian concept of conservation and demonstrate a knowledge of the cognitive area of development.
4. Observe an example of frustration at your center and discuss this example in terms of the development of personality.
5. Observe a free play situation at your center. Identify and describe in written form incidents of solitary play, parallel play and cooperative play.
6. Show a knowledge of ways of building feelings of adequacy in your center children.
7. Discuss examples of evaluative and behavioral specific comments.
8. Show an awareness of how your own feelings affect the children in your center.
9. Show your understanding of the concept of limits by written examples.
10. List and show an understanding of examples of physical evidence of emotional discomfort in a child.
11. List and show an understanding of alternatives to offer a child to help him cope with negative feelings.
12. Show your understanding of children with serious emotional problems through implementation of suggestions given and discussion of the results of the implementation.
13. Show your understanding of some of the methods used in directing behavior through discussion of specific behaviors and ways of handling these behaviors.
14. Demonstrate a knowledge of use of the Portage Project Check List through completion of the final project.

INSTRUCTIONS TO THE FIELD ADVISOR

We are counting on you for the evaluation of the students of this learning package. We have divided the material into thirteen sections and a final project. Each of these fourteen sections requires the student to discuss the assigned material with you, and most of the sections require the student to do a simple task which he is to discuss with you. In order for you to facilitate the student's discussion, evaluate him accurately, and give him helpful suggestions, you must be familiar with the assigned material yourself and be prepared to deal with the various outcomes that may come from the tasks.

Your overall evaluation of the student will be more accurate if you keep records which will show whether or not the student has completed each assignment and the degree of mastery he has attained for each.

INTRODUCTION

When one of the authors has trouble sleeping, he sometimes takes a book that he should read but doesn't really want to, to go to bed with him. Conks him right out. Students have no trouble obtaining such books; in fact, avoiding them is more often the problem. We hope that this learning package will be valuable to you other than just to help you sleep sometimes. We have attempted to combine some general academic material on developmental psychology, some more concentrated material on the social and emotional development of young children, and some exercises that we hope will demonstrate to you some of the things that we have been trying to say.

The three of us who have put together this packet have widely different backgrounds, although we all three tend to say the same inane sorts of things when we stay up too late together working on this project, and we all three share the same belief that a good teacher not only has intuitive ability and rapport with his students, but also is open to learning about and making use of psychological principles established by other people through experience and research.

It is our hope that this packet will above all else be useful to you, that you will be able to directly apply what you learn, to understand your children better and to be more able to effectively intervene to facilitate their emotional and social development.

The evaluation of your performance will be made by your Field Advisor. You will be asked to discuss with him both the tasks we will have you do, the general content of the assigned readings, and the final project. We hope that you will do very well.

Joan and Russell Lee
Rita Salner

I. OBSERVATION AND EXPERIMENTATION

Assignment:

Read Chapter 1, Mussen," Introduction." Pay careful attention to the paragraphs on observation and experimentation.

Activity #1.

Write down some of the techniques of observation and experimentation. Discuss these with your Field Advisor.

II. PRINCIPLES OF DEVELOPMENT

Assignment:

Read Chapter 2, Mussen,"General Principles of Development,"and page 18, Mayer,"Pushing Children." Pay special attention to the paragraphs on readiness and critical periods.

Activity #2.

We would like you to try out an experiment to measure the concept of readiness and how it affects timing in teaching. The ability to draw a square is usually achieved around the age of 5. If the concept of readiness applies it would not make sense to try to teach this skill to a 4-year-old. Try it yourself. Select a young 4 year old and a 5-year-old child from your center. Pick children who have not had practice learning to make squares but who are familiar with a pencil and know how to hold it. Take a piece of paper and draw a square while the 4-year-old is watching. Ask him to copy your shape. Then do the same thing with your 5 year old subject. Be sure to select subjects who are different in age but cannot do the task before you have taught it to them. Then teach the 4 and 5-year-old children to draw a square. If the concept of readiness is a valid one, the 5-year-old should learn the task with much less effort and much less practice than his 4-year-old counterpart. Record the results of your experiment below and discuss your findings with your Field Advisor.

Readiness is an important concept to keep in mind while dealing with children. It is defined as a point in time when a child has achieved the maturation, experiences, and skills necessary to move from one level of development to another. A teacher can teach a certain task and use a lot of praise while teaching it, but unless a child is developmentally "ready" to master that task, the teacher is wasting time. For example, we would not expect a newborn infant who cannot lift his head or use his arms and legs in a meaningful way to begin to crawl - he is not developmentally ready.

Experimenters have tested this concept of readiness by using identical twins. They attempt to teach them a skill such as riding a tricycle. One twin is trained to ride a tricycle and given ample amounts of practice; the other twin is given the tricycle to ride several weeks later and in one-third the time achieved the same competency as the other twin due to increased maturation. Older children need less practice to become as skillful at a task as younger children with the same abilities.

Hopefully, as a result of your experiment, you've found that readiness is an important consideration to look at before you teach a particular task. The problem occurs in just how to determine if a child is ready or not. One way is to break every task down into its component parts; if a child cannot do each of the component parts or is not able to learn them, he probably is not ready to try the task as a whole. Skipping is a good example. All teachers know that children learn a lot of motor activities before they learn how to skip. If you break skipping down into its parts you can see how complex a motor action it really is. Skipping is composed of a slide and a hop on one foot accomplished while swinging the opposite arm. The child must first learn how to balance on one foot for some time and coordinate this balancing with a slide before he can put it all together into a skipping motion. And that's just the part that his feet are doing. So when should

you teach a child to skip (which was your question from the beginning.) Developmental checklists come in handy for that evaluation because they help to discover where the child is at, and what developmental tasks precede and follow where he's at. Your final project will introduce you to these checklists.

III. LANGUAGE, COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT, AND INTELLIGENCE

Assignment;

Read Chapter 4, Mussen,"Language, Cognitive Development, and Intelligence."

Activity #3.

Choose a 4-year old from your center and show him two identical glasses filled with beads. He will say that the two glasses hold the same amount of beads. Then transfer the beads from one of the glasses into a third glass, one that is taller and thinner than the others. Ask him now which glass has more beads and he will say the taller glass.

Somewhere between the ages of 5 and 7, the child suddenly becomes aware that the amount of beads remains the same regardless of the shape of the container. Repeat the above experiment with one of the older children in your center. Record your observations below.

Do you think that stages of intellectual growth can be taught before the child is maturationally ready? Note your thoughts and the results of your experiment. Discuss this with your Field Advisor.

While children develop the concepts of "smaller than" and "larger than" while very young, full use of these concepts is only gradually achieved. A four-year-old, for example, may not understand that"larger"means larger than something else. The child may not understand that"larger"is not a word that applies to something by itself, rather that it is a comparative word.

Children aged three to five also have a general inability to concentrate on more than one dimension of an object at a time. Their understanding of concepts is based largely on what they see, and not on abstract principles which can give the child a set towards looking for two or more dimensions. For instance, if a child were to determine which of two glasses were bigger, he might look at the height of the two glasses and ignore their width.

Our task is an experiment designed to test Piaget's principle of conservation.

Mussen says that the child from ages two to eleven is in Piaget's stage of concrete operations and that the child from four to seven is in the substage called the period of intuitive thought. Children in this stage seem to intuitively equate the height of a glass with its volume. The older child in your experiment is more likely to say that both containers have the same amount of beads. If asked why, he may explain that while the one glass is taller, the other is fatter. At an older age the child might give a more sophisticated answer by explaining that were you to pour the beads from the tall thin glass back into the short fat one, the level would be the same as for the other short, fat glass. This would illustrate that the child understands the principle of conservation; that a change in container does not change the size of the material contained. Conservation is a good concept to illustrate a change in cognitive development because it points out that the child has begun to use a principle to determine things rather than to just depend on his own perceptions.

We should remember when dealing with young children that their perceptions tend to be very egocentric. When giving two children a piece of cake if, Johnny says that his brother's is bigger, weighing the two pieces will probably not convince him unless he has developed to the point where he understands conservation.

IV. PERSONALITY DEVELOPMENT

Assignment:

Read Chapters 4 and 5, Mussen," The Development of Personality."

You have read that frustration is a thwarting circumstance, an obstacle which interferes with the achievement of a desired goal. We usually speak of frustration as an emotion. Psychologists, however, use the term to mean a circumstance which results in an emotion. Aggression is a common result of frustration. For example, a young child is frustrated when he is not allowed to ride a tricycle, and he may hit the child who is riding the trike. This is an instance when aggression was caused by frustration.

All children face frustration from their environment. Frustration may rouse resentful feelings. Reducing the amount of frustration a child faces is one method of helping him to feel more secure within your center's environment.

Activity #4.

Choose one child who appears to be having a problem "fitting in" or adjusting to your center's routine. Observe the child during a "free play" period. Record the situations which occur where the child is frustrated (was unable to carry out a purpose.) Notice how the child dealt with the situation and how he handled his feelings. Decide what alternatives you could have presented to the child to help him cope with the situation. Record your observations below and discuss with your Field Advisor.

V. SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Assignment:

Read the portions of Mussen, Chapter 6,"Social Behavior,"which pertain to pre-school children, and read the epilogue.

Whether a child likes or dislikes social situations can initially be based on whether or not the things that happen in his early social relations are pleasant or not. For example, if a child experiences early social relations within the warm and positive presence of his mother, he is more likely to associate pleasantness with social situations than if his mother is cold and withdrawn, or absent during early social situations. Strong feelings toward the mother can generalize to others who share the social situation with her and the child.

Since the first social situations generally involve other members of the child's family, the family can be a strong factor in influencing a child's initial social responses as well. If the family is a close, receptive, warm and loving family, social responses are likely to be encouraged. If the family is a cold and disapproving one, social responses are more likely to be rebuffed.

In some cases, the effect of early socialization experiences can be very long lasting. For example, suppose a very young child is rejected by his mother when he energetically and noisily tries to engage in behavior with her or the rest of the family. If this happens regularly the child will learn to evidence patterns of withdrawal in social situations. He can then establish a "set" or a usual pattern of behavior. Once the child has learned this usual pattern of behavior, like withdrawing in social situations at home, he is more likely to use the same

pattern of behavior in similar situations, say social situation with peers outside the home. Lack of punishment, punishment in this case being the mother's rejection, can in some cases be as reinforcing as a reward, so the child is rewarded for his withdrawal and is thus more likely to continue to use it.

As the physical and intellectual abilities of the pre-school child increase, his ability to interact with his peers increases. Psychologists have differentiated three types of play that involve different levels of association with peers. Solitary play is the play of a child by himself. An example of this might be one child playing with blocks while another child across the room plays with a truck. Although in the same room, the children are playing by themselves. Parallel play is the play of two or more children using the same playthings, but playing alongside, not with, each other. An example might be three boys playing with trucks around a wooden bridge. If their play is not organized, it is parallel play. Cooperative play is the organized play of children together. A group of children playing "house" is an example of cooperative play.

Progression from solitary play to cooperative play is partially due to increased ability to physically get around and increased intellectual ability to become involved in complex cooperative efforts but an additional reason is that the older child probably has had more experiences in which outgoing social responses were rewarded. Playgrounds, play groups, and nursery school (not to mention Head Start) are circumstances during which the child can learn that group-centered responses can bring pleasure. The more pleasure the child receives from group centered responses, the more likely he is to continue to make those responses in the future.

As social interations increase in frequency, they tend to increase in complexity. Children are given the opportunity to try out behaviors that they could not use before, such as being bossy, competitive, or perhaps sympathetic. Friendships become a result of increased social interaction as well. First friendships are generally formed between the ages of two and five. Factors which influence the formation of these friendships are similarities in sex, social participation, physical activity, chronological age, and, of course, availability. The relative importance of these factors will change as the children grow older.

Competitiveness is another factor in the social development of children. Competition, as measured by the extent to which children at play grab at materials that other children are playing with, has been studied at various age levels (Mussen, et. al., 1963, p. 330). Two-year-olds showed very little competition; competition increased among three and four year olds, and became much more intense among five and six-year-olds. An example of the far reaching effects of competition is that one of the authors has conducted studies among his college students where the students are divided into two groups, both of which can earn medium amounts of money unless they compete, in which case it is possible for one group to receive more money, the other to lose money. In every case the competition has become so strong that both groups lost money. Perhaps we become too competitive.

Head Start can have a definitive effect on the socialization of children. Some studies (Mussen, et. al., 1963, p. 335) have shown that children who had been in pre-school programs for six months were rated as more spontaneous, less inhibited, and more socialized than a matched control group who did not have the pre-school training; although after

the children enter school, and as time goes on, these differences become much more difficult to detect, until they disappear. Other studies have shown that the way in which the pre-school program is run can have a significant effect. Children whose teachers were rated as warm, friendly and cooperative, and who maintained a great deal of personal contact, showed increased social development compared to a group of children whose teachers were rated as understanding and interested, but somewhat detached from the activities.

Activity #5

Observe a free play situation at your center. Identify and describe below an incident of solitary play, parallel play, and cooperative play in a paragraph on each. Discuss the assignment with your Field Advisor.

VI. EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Assignment:

Read pages 1 - 10, Mayer, an overview of emotional development, and pages 11 - 17, Mayer, on adequacy and security.

As teachers, we must determine when to help and when to allow the child to help himself. A few years ago the phrase, "Please, Mother, I'd rather do it myself" was the common punch line to several jokes. Many of our children, if they only dared, would say "I'd rather do it myself." When we step in to finish tasks which the child is capable of achieving on his own, we are undermining the child's confidence in his own abilities. When we step in to correct (just a little), his drawings and paintings, we are undermining his confidence in his abilities. The trick is to know when the child is able to finish the task, and when it is beyond his abilities. From experience, we know that most pre-school children can put on their own coats. We also know that most cannot tie their own shoes. Therefore, the child should be allowed to put on his coat, but should receive assistance in tying his shoes. Your final project will involve a checklist which will give you help in determining whether or not a task is within the range of a child's capabilities.

Feelings of adequacy can be built in other ways as well. Praising a child for particular tasks accomplished does much toward helping the child feel successful. "You tie your shoes well" tells the child exactly how he is successful as opposed to vague comments, such as, "You're a good boy.".

Adequacy can also be built by having many successful experiences and a few failures. Therefore, the ideal teaching situation allows the child a large number of successful learning experiences and a few failures to allow room to grow.

Activity #6.

List five things you can do to build feelings of adequacy in children. Try them with several children. Record and discuss the results with your Field Advisor.

VII. UNDERSTANDING CHILDREN'S FEELINGS

Assignment:

Read pages 19 - 20, Mayer,"Children and Guilt."

Accurate communication is essential with pre-school age children because they are unable to interpret levels of meaning that form the basis for comments that adults make; they interpret literally what is said. Haim Ginott, in his book Between Parent and Child, 1965, illustrates this point:

> It was early in the morning, the Monday after Thanksgiving weekend. The woman on the telephone sounded frantic. "Figure this out" she said, "if you can! Here we are in the car, the whole family. We drove four hundred miles from Pittsburgh to New York. In the back of the car, Ivan behaved like an angel, quiet and deep in thought. I said to myself, 'He deserves some praise.' We were just entering the Lincoln Tunnel when I turned to him and said, 'You are such a good boy, Ivan. You behaved so well. I am proud of you.'
>
> A minute later the sky fell on us. Ivan pulled out an ashtray and spilled its contents all over us. The ashes, the cigarette butts, and the smoke kept coming, like atomic fallout. We were in the tunnel, in heavy traffic, and we were choking. I could have killed him. If it were not for the other cars around us, I would have murdered him on the spot. And what burned me up most was that I had just praised him so sincerely. Isn't praise good for children any more?"
>
> Weeks later Ivan himself revealed the cause of the explosion. All the way home he had been wondering how he could get rid of his younger brother, who was snuggled up between mother and father in the front of the car. Finally the idea occurred to him that if their car were jackknifed in the middle, he and his parents would be safe, but the baby would be cut in two. Just then mother had congratulated him on his goodness. The praise made him feel guilty and he wanted desperately to show that he did not deserve it. He looked around, saw the ashtray, and the rest had followed instantly.
>
> Most people believe that praise builds up a child's confidence and makes him feel secure. In actuality, praise may result in tension and misbehavior. Why? Many children have, from time to time, destructive wishes about members of their family. When parents tell a child, "You are such a good boy," he may not be able to accept it because his own picture of himself is quite different. In his own eyes, he cannot be 'good' when only

> recently he wished that his mother had a zipper on her mouth or that his brother would spend next weekend in the hospital. In fact, the more he is praised, the more he misbehaves in order to show his "true self." Parents frequently report that just after praising a child for good deportment, he starts to act wild, as though to disprove their compliment. It is possible that 'acting up' is the child's way of communicating his private reservations about his public image. Desirable and undesirable praise. Does this mean that praise is now "out"? Not at all. The single most important rule is that praise deal only with the child's efforts and accomplishments, not with his character and personality. (pp. 43 - 45.)

Ginott feels that when you make judgments about a personality rather than a behavior, the person becomes dependent on an outside source to provide information and good feelings about himself. He feels that good feelings should be intrinsic (supplied by the person's own feelings about himself.) Intrinsic praise is possible when an observer makes comments about actions and the person himself supplies the conclusions.

Ginott writes in Teacher and Child (1972):

> Marcia, age twelve, helped the teacher rearrange the books in the class library. The teacher avoided personal praise ("You did a good job. You are a hard worker. You are a good librarian.") Instead she described what the child, Marcia, accomplished: "The books are all in order now. It'll be easy for the children to find any book they want. It was a difficult job, but you did it. Thank you." The teacher's words of recognition allowed Marcia to make her own inference. "My teacher likes the job I did. I am a good worker." (pp. 126 - 127).

In conclusion, evaluative comments are those which make judgments about a person as a whole; for example "You're a good boy" or "You're a bad boy," while behavior comments reflect an action the person carried out, for example, "You moved the desk for me. Thank you."

Activity #7.

Be aware of the specific behavioral comments you are making to the children at your center. Write down examples of evaluative comments and comments that focus on behavior and discuss them with your Field Advisor.

VIII. UNDERSTANDING OUR OWN FEELINGS

Assignment:

Read pages 20 - 21, Mayer,"Adults and Security."

We feel it is necessary for the teachers and aides in a center to be aware of their own feelings and how these feelings affect their behavior toward the children. Katherine Read,in her book The Nursery School (1966),spends a number of pages discussing our need to understand ourselves. Adult feelings are often less open and direct than children's feelings and often harder to relate to a specific experience. Adults often have developed defense mechanisms which enable them to function efficiently in society,but have closed them off from their ability to look at themselves and why they are feeling or reacting in a particular way. If a teacher is angry at his supervisor,he may not express his feelings to his boss for fear of losing his job. But nevertheless,the feelings of anger exist,and the teacher might cope with them by taking them out on the children he is working with. The anger has been dealt with,but not in an appropriate way. Defense mechanisms are a means of disguising reality so that we can live more comfortably with it. A classic example is Aesop's fox who, unable to reach grapes that it wanted to eat, decided that they were sour. The grapes may have been very sweet, but the disappointment was less for the fox if it thought that the grapes were sour. We all use a variety of defense mechanisms, and it is probably necessary for us to use them; if, however, we can minimize their use we can deal with life being more in contact with reality. Decisions made on the basis of reality are likely to be more effective than decisions based on defensive fantasy. If we deal

with reality more than defensive fantasy, our children are likely to imitate us.

It is important that an adult accurately identify his feelings and express them in a real manner for two reasons: 1. He serves as a role model for the children (children imitate to a certain extent the people who are important in their lives) and 2. Children tend to sense the underlying feelings that the adult may not be expressing.

Read feels that an important task for the adults working with children is to attempt to understand themselves. We are all influenced by the experiences we had as children. Because we all began as infants, we were dependent on others to meet our basic needs such as food, warmth, and love. Read feels that the way these needs were met influence our current behavior. If they were met in a positive way and satisfied, he feels we are more likely to respond to children in a similar way. If our initial needs were met, we were able to progress from this dependent stage to a more independent one; and consequently more able to accept dependency in others. This is a healthy attitude for those dealing with preschoolers. Another way we are affected in the present by experiences we had as children occurs in the area of frustration. Read feels that we have developed negative feelings because of the frustrations we met as children, imposed by physical helplessness and the socializating process that may have limited ways in which we wanted to act. Everyone has undergone a different socialization process and has been handled more or less gently by their parents. Read, again, is trying to

bring these experiences to our awareness so we are conscious of the fact that the preschoolers in our center are experiencing the same feelings of hostility and aggression that we did. Read feels that adults are better able to handle their feelings and, when their feelings are recognized, they can effectively help children to handle theirs by supporting and accepting them.

Activity #8.

Think about how your own feelings might affect the children in your center. Write down some specific occasions when this has happened. Discuss this with your Field Advisor.

IX. SETTING LIMITS

Assignment:

Read pages 22 - 23 and 57 - 64, Mayer, on "Setting Limits."

Limits are set successfully when the child clearly understands what he is to do or not to do and when the teacher or parent is consistent in maintaining the standards that she has set. Sometimes it is necessary to break down the limit that you have set into several components so that the child may more easily understand your expectations. "You must go to bed at 8:00" may be more clearly said as, "At 8:00 you must take off your clothes, put on your pajamas, brush your teeth, and climb into bed." If you also expect the clothes to be hung up, this will have to be stated. This multiplex direction will be more successfully carried through if you reward each separate component with praise as it is completed.

The parent will have less trouble in getting the child to bed each night if he is consistent in maintaining the specific time set in his limit. Once a child has argued his way out of a limit the precedent is set, and he will try again and again to see if a limit can be avoided.

Before setting a limit, you should think it through and be sure that the limit is really important to you. Once you have established the importance of it in <u>your</u> mind, then the limit should be maintained.

Limits are sometimes unsuccessful for other reasons than poor definition. Giving in to an argument is one obvious example of an unsuccessful limit. Other problems arise in simply not being aware of the child's failure to comply with your wishes. If you say "You may not get on the table," then you must be sure to follow through and be sure the child gets off the table. If it really isn't important to you, then it shouldn't be stated. Limits should also be within the child's capabilities. To be absurd, it is useless

to demand that a child hang up his clothes if he is unable to reach the hook. No one is at his best when he is ill, and often a child is less able to accept a limit that he might accept readily if he were feeling better.

In thinking through a limit that was set unsuccessfully, determine if you defined your expectation clearly, carefully and consistently maintained the limit, specifically praised for follow-through of the limit, and placed only those limits that were both important to you and within the child's present capabilities. If a limit you have set is unsuccessful because it has not met these criteria, simplify your requirements and reestablish the limit.

Activity #9

Record a situation where you successfully defined and maintained a limit for a child, and a situation where a problem arose because you failed to define a limit clearly. Discuss these situations with your Field Advisor.

X. MEETING CHILDREN'S NEEDS

Assignment:

Read pages 25 - 34, Mayer,"Helping Children with Everyday Difficulties."

Activity #10.

List physical evidences of discomfort in a child in your center whom you feel to be uncomfortable, and ways you might help to make him feel more comfortable. Discuss them with your Field Advisor.

XI. HELPING CHILDREN DEAL WITH FEELINGS

Assignment:

Read pages 34 - 43, Mayer,"How to Handle Feelings."

Activity #11.

List 10 positive alternatives to offer a child to help him cope with a negative feeling. Discuss these alternatives with your Field Advisor.

XII. UNDERSTANDING THE CHILD WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Assignment:

Read pages 43 - 55, Mayer,"The Child with Serious Emotional Difficulties."

Activity #12.

Choose one of the three labels given in the text that best suits a child from your center. Implement the suggestions given and discuss the results with your Field Advisor.

XIII. DIRECTING BEHAVIOR

Assignment.

Read pages 66 - 71, Mayer,"Directing Behavior."

In directing behaviors it would be well to keep in mind five points delineated by Lerner (1971):

> Rapport: a good relationship between the teacher and students is an essential first step in educational therapy...A good relationship implies compassion without overinvolvement, understanding without indulgence, and a genuine concern for the child's development.
>
> Collaboration: the pupil should be involved in both analysis of his problem and evaluation of his performance.
>
> Structure: Both structure and limits are important elements in teaching children...
>
> Sincerity: Children are skillful at detecting insincerity. Honest appraisal is necessary. The child soon detects dishonesty if he is told he is doing well when he is not.
>
> Success: Achieving goals in learning and acquiring a feeling of success are of prime importance...(pp. 76 - 77).

In short, no one will change their behavior for a disinterested person wh falsely praises them. Change will come about for the sincere person who tells them specifically when they do well.

Ignoring is also only successful when used in instances where there is an established rapport so that the child cares when attention is withdrawn. Care should be taken in deciding to ignore a behavior for, should you change your mind, it is more difficult to intervene after a behavior has been handled by ignoring.

And finally, if a child is hurting himself or someone else, or is destroying important materials, immediate intervention is mandatory.

Activity #13

Identify three behaviors: one that should be ignored, one that should be reinforced, and one where intervention is necessary. Discuss these behaviors with your Field Advisor.

XIV. ASSESSING A CHILD'S DEVELOPMENT

FINAL PROJECT:

Using the Portage Project checklists on socialization and cognitive development, observe the two oldest and two youngest children in your center. Using the age levels given on the checklists, decide the approximate age level each child is functioning at and compare it to his chronological age. Using the knowledge you have gained from the readings in this course and the scores of each child on the checklist, discuss in writing the ramifications of your finds for your teaching. Submit your analysis to your Field Advisor. Your analysis should include the following:

1. The chronological age of the children compared to age of achievement on the Portage Project.
2. Specific implications of 1. (above) for teaching plans.
3. These teaching plans should be based on
   A. Needs identified by the Portage Project check list, and
   B. Suggestions from or insight gained from the texts.

Before beginning, read carefully the following information on Behavior Checklists provided by Don Henry and Fred Aden, Office of Child Development/ Bureau of the Educationally Handicapped Project.

XV. USING WRITTEN GUIDES TO ASSESS DEVELOPMENT

People often want to know what kinds of things they should expect a child to be doing during the time he or she is in Head Start. One way of answering this question is to say that you might expect a Head Start child to do the things that most other children of the same age are doing. (For example, most four-year-olds can correctly point to their eyes, nose, mouth, ears, and many other parts of their body, so you might expect that most Head Start children would do this if asked.) Another way of answering the question is to say that you should expect the child to keep on doing the things he or she is already doing (regardless of what most other kids of the same age can do), but also expect that new things will gradually appear. (Even if most other four-year-olds can point to many parts of their body, the four-year-old who can only point to his nose and mouth will probably need some time to learn to point to other body parts.) Both of these answers are accurate. It is important to know what to expect in the normal course of development. However, it is also important to know that just because a child is not doing some or many things that other children of the same age are doing, you cannot expect that he or she should automatically be able to do those things. The progress may come about slowly.

The use of written guides when looking at children is one way of helping to understand what is expected in the normal course of child development. Also, written guides can help parents, teachers, specialists, and others figure out specific things that a child seems to be able to do at any particular time.

What Are These Written Guides

The guides are lists of things that most children can be expected to

do at different ages. They are often called behavior checklists. These checklists have been put together by people who have observed many different things about children as they develop during the early years of their lives. Some of these things include; 1. the way children talk, how they use words and make sentences; 2. the way children take care of themselves, how they put on clothes, eat, wash themselves, etc.; 3. the way children get along with other people, how they play with other children and respond to adults; 4. the way children coordinate their movements, how they walk, run, hold spoons, etc..

So now you have an inkling of what the behavior checklist is all about It is a tool for you to use, to help you figure out what kinds of things you see children doing, and to help you chart or record these things in a meaningful way.

How To Use A Behavior Checklist

1. Use one set of checklists (cognitive and socialization) for each child to be observed.

2. Thoroughly review a checklist prior to using it so you know what behaviors you will be looking for. It is not necessary, however, to memorize the sequences of tasks on a checklist.

3. Start by looking at one child and at one skill area at a time. Practice this kind of observation with the idea that you are developing your own observation skills and understanding of developmental skills that are important.

4. Observe the child during normal activities in the home or classroom. Usually it is not necessary to set up a special activity which is different from the home routine or classroom curriculum.

5. Observe the child at different times, over several days, and during different activities.

6. Observation periods can be short - 5 to 15 minutes at a time, or less.

7. Your prior knowledge of how well the child performs should help you to immediately narrow-down the possible choices on a behavior checklist. In other words, it will usually not be necessary to start with item #1 and go through every item.

8. Score a plus (+) or check (✓) if a behavior given on a checklist occurs fifty percent (50%) of the time in a normal situation calling for that performance.

9. A plus (+) or check (✓) can be placed by a behavior on the exact date it is achieved, or when observed during periodic skill reassessment. Recording the date that the observation was made is important.

10. Move on to the next developmental area checklist.

11. Begin thinking how you might use the information you have gained through this careful observation. How might this information apply to what you want to teach the child next? How might it apply to your expectations for the child? How might it affect the way you teach a skill?

Cautions About The Use Of Behavior Checklists

Just like all other tools or methods, a behavior checklist can be misused. Therefore, it is advisable to look at some cautions.

1. DO NOT USE A BEHAVIOR CHECKLIST AS A TEST TO COMPARE ONE CHILD WITH ANOTHER.

   A checklist should be used to determine the level at which the teacher and parent should begin working with each individual child.

2. DO NOT BECOME OVERLY CONCERNED WHEN YOU SEE THAT A CHILD IS NOT PERFORMING CERTAIN TASKS OR BEHAVIORS.

   Too much concern, without additional observations and possibly specialist evaluations, can lead to "over-teaching." Trying to force a child to learn will only result in more frustration for the child.

3. DO NOT TRY TO TEACH A SKILL AS IT IS GIVEN ON A CHECKLIST.

   Each skill can be broken down into many smaller tasks. The process of breaking-down a skill into smaller tasks is called "task analysis."

4. DO NOT TRY TO OBSERVE ALL OF THE SKILL AREAS AT ONE TIME, OR IN ONE SITTING.

   This would be too confusing, and children do not display all skills at any one time. Try several observations of a child's behavior during different activities, and at different times of the day. This should make the observation process easier and more accurate.

5. DO NOT TRY TO SECOND GUESS THE CHILD.

   If you do not actually observe a child performing a skill, do not give him/her the benefit of the doubt when marking the checklist. Remember, checklists give a description of a child's behavior. A checklist is not a test, so a child cannot fail. "If you don't see it, don't mark it."

6. DO NOT EXPECT ALL CHILDREN TO FOLLOW THE WRITTEN ORDER OF THE CHECKLIST EXACTLY.
   For example, children may skip some behaviors completely, or they may learn behaviors out of sequence.

7. DO NOT BE CONCERNED ABOUT THE AGE OF THE CHILD.

   If a child's behavior can be described by items on the checklists, then it is appropriate to use the checklists with that child, no matter what age. In other words, each child's educational program should be guided by an understanding of that child's skills and difficulties. You observe what he/she is doing and what he/she is not doing - and then you plan what you will do based on those observations.

Don Henny
Fred Aden
OCD/BEH Project

Suggested Additional Readings

In addition to the readings assigned in this package, you may also be interested in the following:

Virginia Axline, Dibs: In Search of Self

Virginia Axline, Play Therapy

Claudia C. Peterson, A Child Grows Up

Lawrence Brammer, The Helping Relationship

Erik Erikson, Childhood and Society

Henry Maier, Three Theories of Child Development (Erickson, Piaget, and Sears)

Clark Moustakas, Teaching as Learning

Clark Moustakas, Children in Play Therapy

Clark Moustakas, The Child's Discovery of Himself

Mussen, Conger, and Kagan, Reading in Child Development and Personality

Robert Anderson and Harold Shane, As the Twig is Bent

Kaoru Yamamoto, The Child and His Image

Evelyn Sharp, Thinking is Child's Play

Barry Wadsworth, Piaget's Theory of Cognitive Development

Copies of these books are available in the Child Development Training Program's Resource Library.

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Ginott, Haim G. Teacher & Child: A Book for Parents and Teachers, New York: The MacMillan Company, 1972.

Lerner, Janet W. Children With Learning Disabilities: Theories, Diagnosis, and Teaching Strategies. Boston: Houghton Miffin & Company, 1971.

Mussen, P.H., Conger, J.J. and Kagan, J. Child Development and Personality (2nd ed.) New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1963.

Read, Katherine H. The Nursery School: A Human Relationships Laboratory, (4th ed.) Philadelphia: W.B. Saunders Company, 1966.

PACKAGE EVALUATION

1. In what ways has this package helped you to grow?

2. Were the goals of the package meaningful to you?

3. Were the readings outside of the package helpful?

4. Was the material in the package itself helpful?

5. Were the learning activities helpful?

6. What readings and activities or other resources should be added to this package or changed to make it a better learning experience for you?